

GOOSE-SHAPED KITE APPROVED BY BELL

Scientist Dismisses Chicago
Man's Invention.

LIKE DIRIGIBLE BALLOON

Windy City Annot's Plan Not So
Visionary as Many
thought.

The account of the wild goose shaped balloon in which inventor Mahan, according to Chicago dispatches, expects to sail to the White House on April 21, is considered by several Washington authorities a "wild goose story" as far as its feasibility is concerned.

Dr. Alexander Graham Bell, of tetrahedral kite fame, whose knowledge of the laws of gravity and whose inventive genius are doubtless second to none in the country, discussed the wild goose balloon project last night with a reporter of THE TIMES.

"I would not throw cold water on this or any other similar project," he declared with emphasis. "I have great sympathy with anyone starting out to invent something new. A successful inventor has to pass through three trying stages. The first is that of a crank. By many he is thought crazy for having the audacity to outline his project, so new are his ideas in the public eye. After the invention is completed he must be prepared to have it at first considered nothing but 'toy' and after the first stage has been reached, then the third stage is reached. This is when the invention is found to have been known for ages."

"As you perhaps know," he continued, "every invention consists of a combination of instrumentalities. In themselves, and taken separately, they are old. It is the combination into one grand whole that makes an invention an invention."

GOOSE-SHAPED BALLOON POSSIBILITY.

"This goose-shaped kite and the ideas of the proposed inventor, as outlined in the dispatches, contain nothing impracticable as far as I can see. The cost, however, would likely be far in excess of the original estimate, of \$2,500. I think his plan is very much on the order of the Santos Dumont dirigible balloon, the chief difference being that the latter is cigar-shaped instead of being like a wild goose."

"That's all. It is very evident to me that to drive two machines of the same weight twenty miles the specifically heavy one will require less power than the specifically light machine. The heavy machine is less retarded by the air. Or take this illustration—it requires less power to propel one pound of lead through the air twenty miles than a pound of feathers."

"Dumont's most successful machine was a heavy one, although he used the smallest balloon. But he weighted it down with ballast and steered upward by means of a propeller. This afforded him the advantage of being able to throw out ballast and save his gas."

Chicago Airship Heavier Than Air.

"This goose-shaped balloon would be heavier than the air just as geese are heavier. Any machine that is to make its way against the wind must be heavier. If a cubic metre of air weighs a kilogram I would say that a cubic metre of wild goose would weigh 500 kilograms."

"This Chicago man's idea of providing his machine with wings having air valves to open and close on the same principle as those of a wild goose, is nothing new. The Patent Office has already issued patents for flying machines. Of course, the wild goose alone, as described, might be ideal, if it must fly first."

Inflammable Gas the Great Danger.

"The great danger of these balloons is the inflammable gas they contain. A spark from the motor and all is over. For this reason the motor has been put far away, bringing the center of gravity much below the center of buoyancy. And as the center of gravity is farther from the center of surface, the machine will swing like a pendulum, much to the distaste of the man."

"The center of gravity wants to be a foot below and in front of the center of buoyancy."

"Do you think this Chicago inventor's balloon machine will sail on April 21st?" Dr. Bell was asked.

"Well," he said, laughing, "I don't expect that he will get as good results as some flying machines now in use, such as those of the Wright Brothers. I consider to have made so much of it the greatest success as far as navigation is concerned."

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